



NEWS RELEASE

Lolo National Forest

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Seeley Lake to Host Firewise Workshops

Missoula, MT. – With the recent wildfire season behind them, citizens in Seeley Lake are planning to hold Firewise Community Workshops November 9-10 at the Mission Bible Fellowship in Seeley Lake. These one-day sessions will address such critical issues as planned development in the Wildland Urban Interface.

The workshops, the first for the community, are open to anyone interested in learning Firewise methods for planning and development – either in existing or planned communities. According to Firewise organizers, the workshops will be of special interest to: elected officials, builders, landscapers, insurance professionals, real estate and homeowner association representatives, emergency managers, and fire officials.

Firewise organizers say that as new construction and development occurs in the Wildland Urban Interface it becomes increasingly important for agencies such as the Forest Service, Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC), and local fire departments like the Seeley Lake Rural Fire Department to be involved in Firewise discussions. All of those agencies are supporting the November workshops.

FIREWISE WORKSHOPS

According to Firewise organizers, workshops prepare community leaders and fire service professionals to recognize Wildland Urban Interface fire hazards, assist homeowners in making homes and landscapes Firewise, deliver fire education to residents, and incorporate Firewise planning into existing and developing communities. According to Seeley Lake Ranger District Fire Prevention Specialist Allison Kolbe, the workshops feature interactive discussions, mapping, and wildfire simulations. “Firewise workshops are most successful when they are attended by a variety of community representatives, such as planners, business leaders, homeowner association members, and emergency service professionals,” Kolbe said.

The national Firewise Communities program is an interagency program designed to encourage local solutions for wildfire safety by involving homeowners, community leaders, planners, developers, firefighters, and others in the effort to protect people and property from the risk of wildfire. The national Firewise Communities program includes Firewise Communities workshops, Firewise Communities/USA recognition program, and support for fire organizations and community groups. The national Firewise Communities program is sponsored by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group’s Wildland/Urban Interface Working Team, a consortium of wildland fire agencies that includes the USDA Forest Service, the Department of the Interior, the National Association of State Foresters, the U.S. Fire Administration, and the National Fire Protection Association. For more information, visit www.firewise.org.

To learn more about the Seeley Lake Firewise Communities Workshop, or to find out how to register, contact Allison Kolbe at 406 677-3908, akolbe@fs.fed.us.

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